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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 HARARE 000477

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STATE PASS TO NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/09/2019

TAGS: ASEC KDEM PGOV PHUM PREL ZI

SUBJECT: CODEL PAYNE: GOZ AND CIVICS PLEAD FOR HEALTH,
EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

REF: HARARE 456

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGEE for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

¶11. (SBU) During his May 29-31 visit to Zimbabwe, Congressman Donald Payne (D-NJ) and three congressional staffers met with senior government officials including President Robert Mugabe (ref), Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara, Health Minister Dr. Henry Madzorera (MDC-T), Agriculture Minister Joseph Made (ZANU-PF) (septel), a wide variety of civil society leaders, the Mayor of Harare, business leaders (septel) and diplomats. The delegation met with numerous senior-level officials who stressed the need to re-engage. Civil society leaders implored for social-sector assistance and debated how to best engage with the inclusive government. Violence victims, in contrast, bemoaned the lack of progress towards improving human rights and described ZANU-PF's foot-dragging as a delay tactic to rebuild violence and torture structures in rural areas. In addition, the range of contacts presented the visitors with a window into the frustrations of Zimbabweans with the lack of progress and the perceived need for donor assistance to help the inclusive government succeed even while security chiefs and hard-liners seek to frustrate progress. END SUMMARY.

Tsvangirai: "We Can't Keep Focusing On The Negative"

¶12. (SBU) Congressman Payne, his delegation, and the Ambassador called on Prime Minister Tsvangirai at his residence on the morning of May 30. Tsvangirai briefed the group on the current state of affairs and laid out the needs of the inclusive government to succeed. Tsvangirai said that if he had chosen to stay out of the government following the flawed June 2008 presidential run-off election, Zimbabwe

would be "heading to Somalia." Despite his initial skepticism about how long the inclusive government would last, Tsvangirai boasted that the arrangement has worked "beyond our expectations." Nonetheless, he conceded, all is not rosy.

¶13. (SBU) Tsvangirai acknowledged continued resistance from the military, Reserve Bank, and former ZANU-PF members who now seek to undermine the inclusive government's success. Regarding the spate of politically-motivated arrests, Tsvangirai remarked that we "have to keep moving forward while putting out fires" as he sidestepped the issue. The PM described free and fair elections as the ultimate prize, and the inclusive government as a process to produce the enabling environment and constitution that will make that possible. "We can't keep focusing on the negative."

¶14. (SBU) He implored Payne and the Ambassador to give the inclusive government a chance. Tsvangirai asked for help with agricultural inputs and credit, even while acknowledging that financing will be difficult as long as the land tenure issue remains unresolved. He described the civil service as "demotivated" as the government has made little investment in social sectors--education and health in particular--in the last ten years. Tsvangirai declared that the success of the inclusive government in correcting these problems will be the demise of those who have created "problems" and are seeking to undermine the current arrangement.

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Ministers: "Help Us Help Ourselves"

¶15. (SBU) In a separate meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara, Deputy Minister of Agriculture-designate Roy Bennett (MDC-T), and Health Minister Dr. Henry Madzorera (MDC-T), the three stressed the need to help the inclusive government succeed -- preferably through immediate assistance to health and education.

¶16. (SBU) While asking for help, Mutambara acknowledged the recent farm invasions, numerous court cases against journalists and abductees, and the continued delay in appointing Bennett to the Ministry of Agriculture as examples of ZANU-PF hard-liners' resistance to fully engaging in and committing to the inclusive government. Mutambara explained that by referring some of the remaining "sticking issues" to SADC, the MDC hopes that "even Mugabe" can't win. Mutambara said he feels betrayed because he encouraged Tsvangirai to join the inclusive government because he thought Mugabe would stick to the commitments he made in the Global Political Agreement (GPA). However, now he sees that Mugabe only gave Tsvangirai crumbs in the GPA, and now he's even holding on to those crumbs. He implored the delegation to "help us help ourselves" by helping the inclusive government succeed and prepare for free and fair elections. Mutambara told us that the success of the inclusive government would shame ZANU-PF.

¶17. (SBU) Bennett began by thanking the U.S. for its continued support of the Zimbabwean people before explaining the continued problems the military poses. Senior security officials, Bennett told us, are bolstering the "dead wood" in ZANU-PF and continue to avoid saluting the Prime Minister in public. Nonetheless, Bennett noted the changes across Zimbabwe as MDC rallies draw large numbers -- evidence of the continued support for Tsvangirai and the MDC. Bennett went on to explain that villagers across Zimbabwe consistently speak of two main issues that should be resolved: the continued tenure of Reserve Bank Governor Gideon Gono and the need for some form of justice. All agreed that without justice for the perpetrators of violence, the country will not be able to heal and move forward. Bennett also told us that Attorney General Johannes Tomana and other senior level

ZANU-PF officials continue to use their positions to take land and houses, and threaten those magistrates who would rule against land seizures.

¶18. (SBU) Dr. Madzorera described health as the most important social service and claimed the Zimbabwean public will judge the inclusive government's success on how well it delivers health services. He repeated Mutambara's and Bennett's assertions that the failure of the inclusive government will be the failure of the MDC. Dr. Madzorera thanked the U.S. for its health-related assistance, citing the cholera response, HIV/AIDS funding, and the significant U.S. contributions to the Global Fund for AIDS, TB, and Malaria. He went on to describe four areas that need attention: (1) human resources, particularly retention and recruitment of workers who are in the diaspora, (2) better supplies of drugs and medicine, (3) equipment (NOTE: much of the hospital equipment currently in use is old and/or in disrepair. END NOTE.), and (4) communication and transport, including ambulances to move patients from rural clinics to district hospitals and long-range radios for rural areas. Dr. Madzorera implored Payne and the Ambassador for more assistance, asserting that it can be provided in the form of material support such as supplies that never have to go through the central government.

Civics Ask for Education Assistance

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¶19. (SBU) The Ambassador later hosted a lunch for Congressman Payne and his delegation and representatives of leading civil society organizations (CSOs) including Otto Saki and Irene Petras from Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR), Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu from Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), Raymond Majongwe from the Progressive Teachers' Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ), Takura Zhangazha from the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), and MacDonald Lewanika from the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition. Lewanika and Saki explained civil society's efforts to monitor the global political agreement (GPA) and engagement in the constitutional process.

Lewanika described the predominant attitude as one of reluctant acknowledgment of the necessity of civic engagement with what most recognize as a flawed process. Those groups advocating non-participation, with Lovemore Madhuku and the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) as the most outspoken player in that group, are in a minority. (NOTE: In a subsequent conversation with poloff on June 4, Williams told poloff that WOZA conducted a survey of members and determined that their position is not far from the NCA's. Williams lamented that most CSO leaders have developed their opinions without consulting their members. END NOTE.)

¶10. (SBU) Williams pleaded for assistance for public education, such as chalk, school books, and supplies, asserting that if efforts are not made to revive the educational system there will be a lost generation of uneducated children and that history "would judge us harshly if we did so." Majongwe reinforced Williams' appeal and suggested that assistance could be provided directly to Zimbabwe's teachers and channeled directly to schools, bypassing corrupt elements in the ministry. He provided a concept paper which he sent to the Congressman describing potential strategies for education sector assistance.

Visit to Decrepit Waterworks

¶11. (SBU) On Sunday May 31, Congressman Payne and his delegation visited the Morton Jaffray waterworks where they were escorted by Harare Mayor Much Masunda and Town Clerk Dr. Tendai Malachi along with the USAID Mission Director and

USAID/OFDA Humanitarian Program Specialist. Morton Jaffray supplies the majority of water to the greater Harare area and needs rehabilitation costing roughly US\$135 million to operate at full capacity. The Senior Operations Officer for the World Bank in Harare, who joined the tour, explained the US\$15 million project that the World Bank plans to implement nationwide, with US\$10-12 million designated for Harare. Emphasizing the extended time frame and high cost of repairs, the USAID Mission Director highlighted that the limited levels of current USAID/OFDA funding to address water and sanitation challenges was best focused on ongoing cholera-prevention at a community level. USAID/OFDA currently focuses on public health and hygiene promotion and the distribution of basic hygiene items (soap, buckets, tablets for household water treatment) to prevent and mitigate outbreaks of diarrheal disease. (COMMENT: In our view, future USG investments should complement the World Bank's large scale investments in central water systems by working with communities on small, community-managed projects. END COMMENT.)

Victims Seek Justice, Not Amnesty

¶12. (C) Congressman Payne and the delegation also met with
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victims of the ZANU-PF regime who lamented the continued politicization of the courts and police. Chris Dlamini, the MDC Chief of Security who was abducted in November, tortured by state security officers, and now faces charges of bombing police stations, described his abduction and torture to the group. Human Rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa emphasized the need for significant reform to ensure police, courts, and the attorney general act fairly and impartially. In addition, she said that perpetrators must face justice. Fidelis Mudimu, the Program Officer with the Counselling Services Unit, reported that ZANU-PF bases and war veterans are already starting to meet again, particularly in Mashonaland East, and are using the current period of calm to reorganize to use violence once again against citizens. President of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions Lovemore Matombo echoed the sentiment that ZANU-PF has not been "rehabilitated" and cannot be trusted. Mtetwa believes that ZANU-PF is deliberately moving slowly towards implementing the GPA in order to rebuild its structures for a future campaign of violence and intimidation.

COMMENT

¶13. (C) Congressman Payne's visit to Zimbabwe was the first CODEL we have had in recent memory and provided an excellent forum for increased engagement on the way forward with government and civil society leadership. While government leaders continue to push for assistance, particularly with the social sector, Zimbabweans in and out of the government have grave concerns about the security forces and the continued lack of justice and democratic space. Although the Prime Minister and senior MDC leadership tend to paint these concerns as mere distractions, they have the potential to undermine the inclusive government's success with or without increased foreign assistance. These pleas for help and financing are being made even while human rights abusers continue to walk free and the leaders of the 2008 election violence rebuild their bases and threaten citizens. END COMMENT.

¶14. (U) NOTE: This cable has not been cleared by Congressman Payne. END NOTE.

MCGEE